

THE TALE OF THE GUN-SHY BOY!



NO. 23

10¢

AND

BILLY THE KID





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**SKINNY
SHRIMP**
to this



NEW
MUSCULAR
RED-BLOODED
HEAD-TO-TOE
HE-MAN!

Ken
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AFTER
MAILING
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Mail the Coupon
below as I did!

May be LAST
CHANCE be-
fore \$1 price
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Millions have been sold at \$1.

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FREE

I just
GAINED
35 NEW LBS.
OF SHAPELY POWER-PACKED
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You can do the same
as I and THOUSANDS have
You can add 10 inches to your CHEST
6 inches to each ARM and
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NO! friend you don't have to be **SKINNY, WEAK** or **FLABBY** any more
just mail **NOW** the **FREE** coupon below as I did. (MILLIONS)

Besides getting ALL 5 Courses (pictured on this page) **FREE** HAVE SOLD F
you'll ALSO get **FREE** a big BOOK of PHOTOs of **STRONG MEN**
and BOYS who were WEAKLINGS like you BEFORE mailing coupon.

THIS THRILLING BOOK WILL ALSO TELL YOU

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Dear George, Please mail to Mr. IRENE Iwatt's Photo Book of Strong Men and a Muscle Miler, plus all 5 HE-MAN Building Courses: 1. How to Build a Mighty Chest 2. How to Build a Mighty Arm 3. How to Build a Mighty Grip 4. How to Build a Mighty Back 5. How to Build Mighty Legs - how to do One Volume "How to become a Mighty HE-MAN" ENCLOSED FIND JOC FOR POSTAGE AND HANDLING. NO C.D.R.'S.

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A BIG 15" TALL
SILVER CUP
as I just did
and how to
WIN \$100.



at \$1.

Look at
JIM NORMAN'S
HEROIC
CHEST
NOW!

1

2

3

4

5

HOW TO ACQUIRE
MIGHTY CHEST

HOW TO ACQUIRE
MIGHTY ARM

HOW TO ACQUIRE
MIGHTY BACK

HOW TO ACQUIRE
MIGHTY GRIP

HOW TO ACQUIRE
MIGHTY LEGS

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1000

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GIVEN AWAY

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☐ Enclosed find \$_____ in full payment.
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BILLY THE KID

HATRED MADE
THE
DESERT HOTTER



IT ALL STARTED WITH A
KNIFE RISING SLOWLY...



... WITH THE BROAD
BACK OF A TIRED PROS-
PECTOR AS AN UNSUS-
PECTING TARGET...



... AND A TWIG CRACK-
LING AS THE KNIFE
STARTED SLASHING
DOWN!



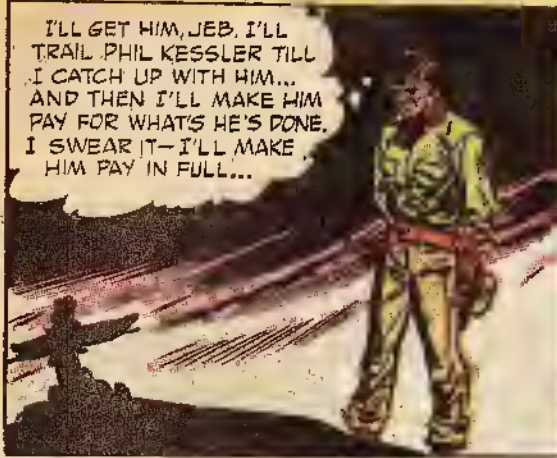
NO, PHIL...
NO!





OLD JEB WAS DEAD NOW... AND AS BILLY THE KID KNEELED BY THE FRESH SHALLOW GRAVE, DEEP BLACK LINES WERE CARVED INTO HIS FACE BY HATRED...

I'LL GET HIM, JEB. I'LL TRAIL PHIL KESSLER TILL I CATCH UP WITH HIM... AND THEN I'LL MAKE HIM PAY FOR WHAT'S HE'S DONE. I SWEAR IT—I'LL MAKE HIM PAY IN FULL...



THAT'S HOW IT STARTED. THE LONG WINDING TRAIL THAT WAS TO END IN THE DESERT WITH A PILE OF DRY BONES WHITENING UNDER THE BLAZING SUN!

GOOD THING IT RAINED LATELY. PHIL'S TRACKS ARE EASY TO READ...



WEEKS PASSED... KESSLER KEPT RIDING SOUTHWARD. HE WAS IN THE MOUNTAINS NOW, PUSHING HIS MOUNT HARD. HIS FIELD GLASSES HAD TOLD HIM THAT BILLY THE KID WAS ON HIS TRAIL—AND HIS HANDS TREMBLED AS THEY GRIPPED THE REINS...

HAVETA SHAKE HIM OFF! HE WAS A GOOD FRIEND OF JEB'S! HAVETA SHAKE HIM OFF SOMEHOW!



IT WAS A DAY LATER, TOWARD DUSK, WHEN KESSLER SAW HIS CHANCE! SPOTTING A LONE ARAPAHO DRINKING AT A STREAM, HE FIGURED TO SHOOT THE BRAVE AND RIDE AWAY FAST! BILLY COMING AFTER HIM WOULD BED DOWN IN THESE PARTS FOR THE NIGHT...

AN' THUH INDIANS'LL SCALP THUH KID TO PAY FER MY KILLIN' ONE OF THEM!



AND IT HAPPENED JUST AS KESSLER HAD FIGURED! HE CLEARED THE TERRITORY IN TIME... BUT BILLY'S CAMP-SITE THAT EVENING WAS NEAR WHERE THE ARAPAHOS HAD FOUND THE DEAD BRAVE!



BILLY SHOOK AWAKE AT THE FIRST WAR-WHOOPS! AND THERE WAS MORE MAYHEM CRAMMED INTO THE NEXT FEW MINUTES THAN THERE ARE SPINES IN A MAN-SIZE CACTUS PLANT!



BILLY GOT AWAY... BUT HE WAS IN BAD SHAPE NOW! HIS CART-RIDGE BELT HAD BEEN RIPPED OFF, THE ONE SIX-SHOOTER HE HAD WAS EMPTY, THE BULK OF HIS PROVISIONS HAD BEEN LEFT BEHIND, AND HIS HORSE HAD TURNED LAME...



BUT HE WAS STILL ON KESSLER'S TRAIL...

TWO DAYS LATER... KESSLER WAS CLEAR OF THE MOUNTAINS, AND HAD STARTED THE LONG SLOW TREK ACROSS THE DESERT...

ONCE I GET OVER THE BORDER THE KID'LL NEVER CATCH UP WITH ME!

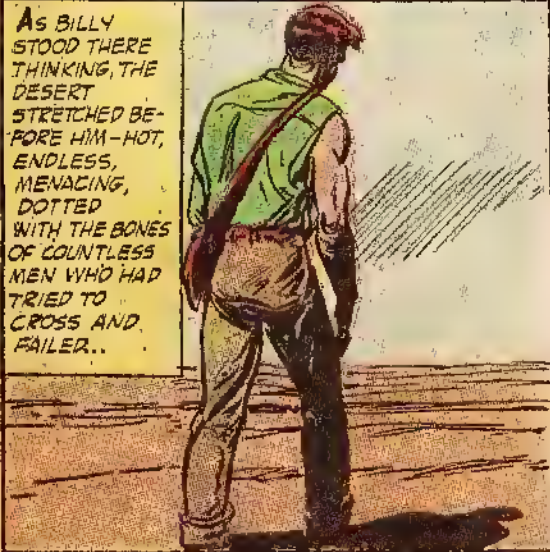


WHEN BILLY CAME TO THE EDGE OF THE DESERT HE STOPPED TO THINK...

IF I DON'T FOLLOW, KESSLER'S TRAIL'LL GROW COLD... IT MIGHT TAKE YEARS BEFORE I CATCH UP WITH HIM! BUT IF I DO FOLLOW, I'LL BE TACKLING THE DESERT WITH ONLY A SMALL CANTEEN OF WATER, A MITE OF BEEF, AND ONE EMPTY GUN!



AS BILLY STOOD THERE THINKING, THE DESERT STRETCHED BEFORE HIM—HOT, ENDLESS, MENACING, DOTTED WITH THE BONES OF COUNTLESS MEN WHO HAD TRIED TO CROSS AND FAILED...



BUT THEN...

I'M NOT LETTING THE TRAIL GROW COLD, JEB. I'LL BE FACE-TO-FACE WITH YOUR KILLER MIGHTY SOON NOW...



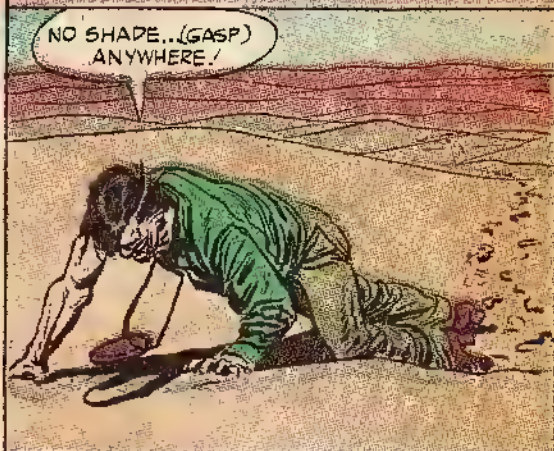
KESSLER'S TRAIL WAS EASY TO READ...BUT HARD TO FOLLOW! THE CLINGING SAND MADE EACH STEP A LABORED EFFORT. INSIDE BILLY'S MOUTH, HIS TONGUE WAS SWOLLEN AND DRY...

CAN'T DRINK NOW, HAVE TO SAVE THE WATER...



THE NOONDAY SUN SEEMED TO THROW UP A SOLID WALL OF SCORCHING FLAME AROUND HIM! SUDDENLY, BILLY PITCHED FORWARD ONTO HIS KNEES...

NO SHADE...(GASP) ANYWHERE!



AS BILLY KNEELED THERE, GASPING—

HE HEARD THE DEADLY CLICKING! TURNED DAZEDLY, HE SAW THE POISED FLAT HEAD, THE MOUTH OPENING WIDER, THE FANG JUTTING OUT...



BILLY REACHED FOR HIS SIX-GUN...



...THE GUN THAT HAD BEEN EMPTIED DURING THE FRACAS WITH THE ARAPAHOES!

A DESPERATE THROW!



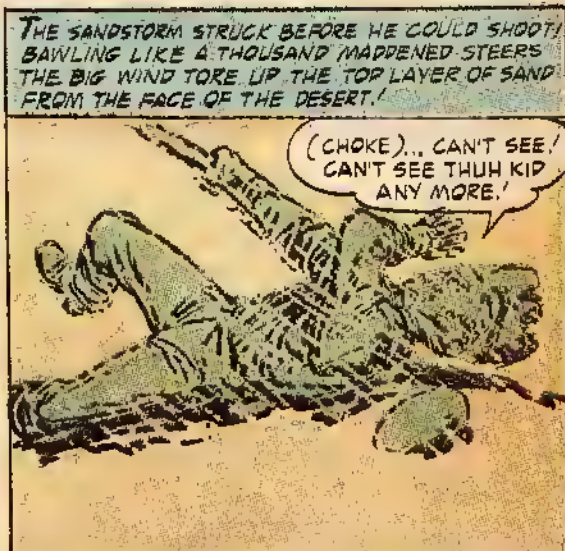
...AND THEN BILLY COLLAPSED WITH THE DEAD RATTLER ONLY A YARD AWAY!



BUT ANOTHER 'RATTLER' HAD BEEN WATCHING...

THUH KID THREW HIS GUN THAT MEAN HE HAS NO BULLETS! I'LL BE AWAITIN' HERE BEHIND THIS DUNE. WHEN HE COMES CLOSE ENOUGH, I'LL SHOOT HIM DOWN!





"IF HE'S STILL ALIVE..." THOSE WORDS RANG OVER AND OVER AGAIN INSIDE KESSLER'S HEAD...



I HAVETA BE SURE!
'CAUSE IF HE AINT DEAD, HE'LL BE AFTER ME AGAIN!
I WON'T HAVE ANY PEACE FER THUH REST OF MY LIFE!
I'LL ALWAYS BE SKEEKED THET WHEREVER I AM, HE MIGHT SHOW UP!

MY RIFLE'S IN GOOD SHAPE—I KEPT IT COVERED DURING THUH STORM.
NOW HOW AM I GOIN' TO FIND THUH KID TO FINISH HIM OFF...?



BUT THEN HE SAW THEM CIRCLING IN THE AIR ABOUT TWO MILES AWAY...

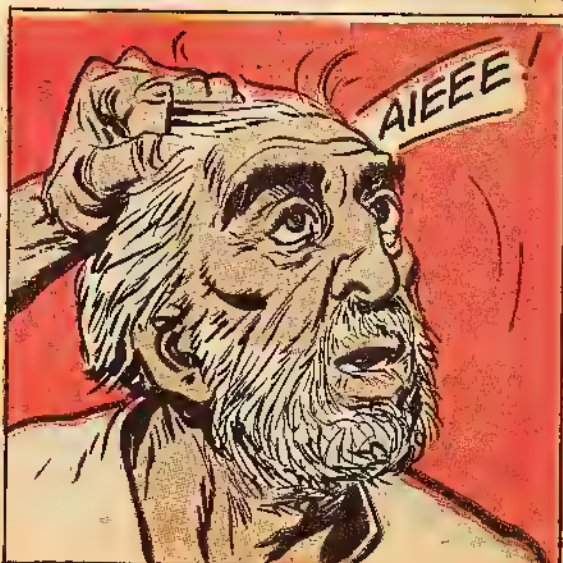
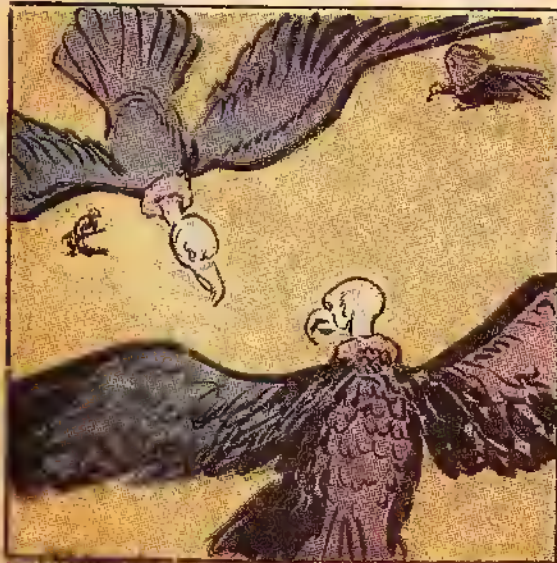


...THE VULTURES!

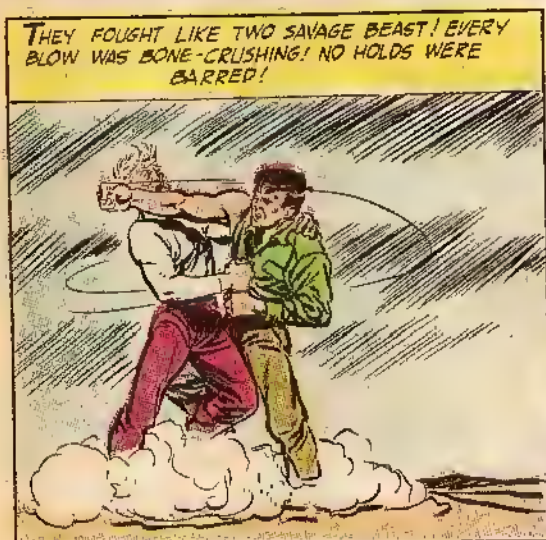
THEY MUST BE CIRCLING OVER THUH KID! THET MEANS HE'S BAD SHAPE... DYING!



ONE SHOT—AN' I'LL NEVER HAVETA WORRY ABOUT HIM AGAIN! I'LL BE SURE THET ONLY ONE OF US IS GONETA LEAVE THIS DESERT ALIVE!

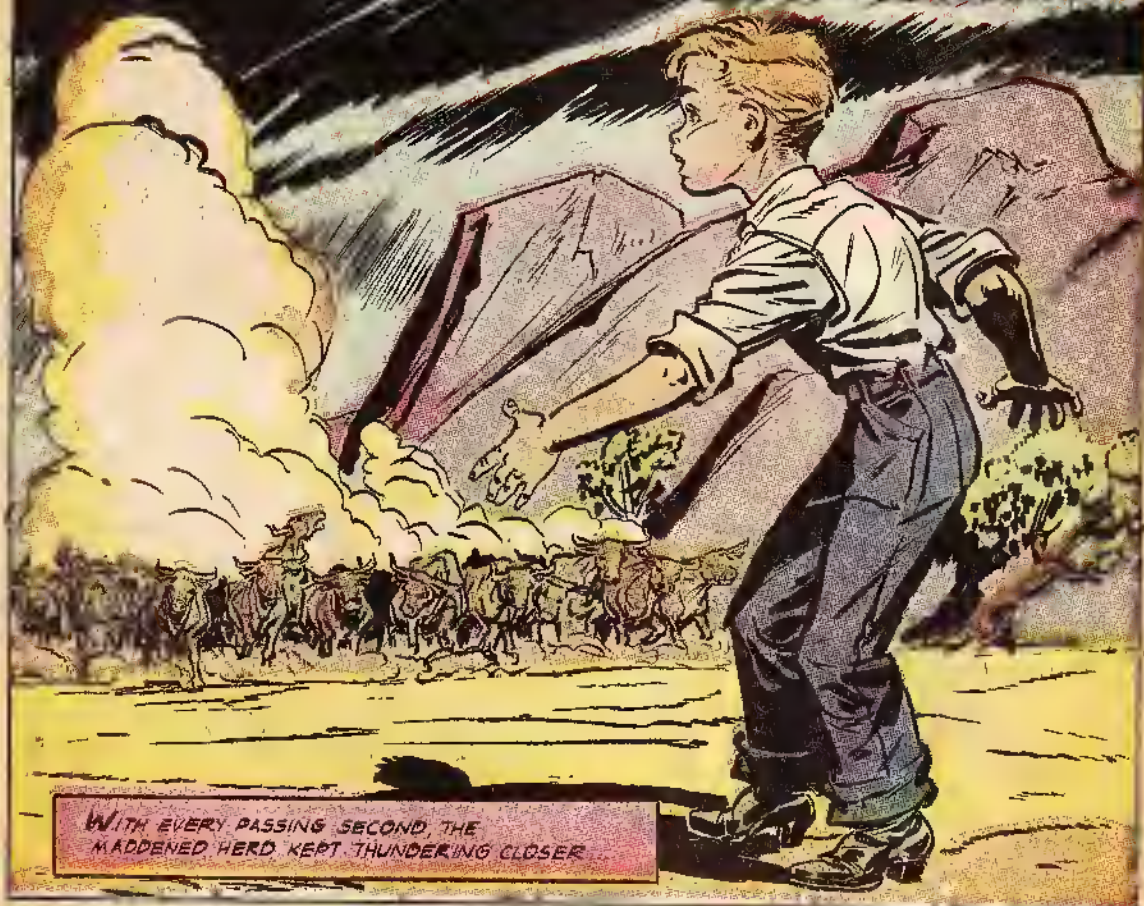


AIEEE!



In the next issue of this magazine Abbott and Costello will tell you how YOU can win a wonderful bicycle in the great \$62,000.00 "POPSICLE" Contest!

The MAVERICK



WITH EVERY PASSING SECOND, THE
MADDENED HERD KEPT THUNDERING CLOSER

THEN WHY DID THE RIDER WATCH
WITH PULLED REINS, AND A
SMILE CURVING HIS THIN, CRUEL
LIPS ??

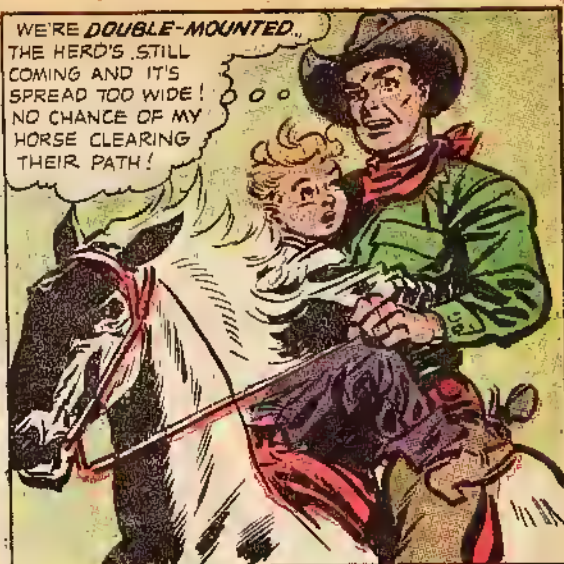


AND WHY A SECOND LATER,
DID HIS FACE WRITHE IN A
GRIMACE OF SHOCK ?



WAS IT BECAUSE BILLY THE
KID WAS GALLOPING OUT OF
THE BRUSH ??

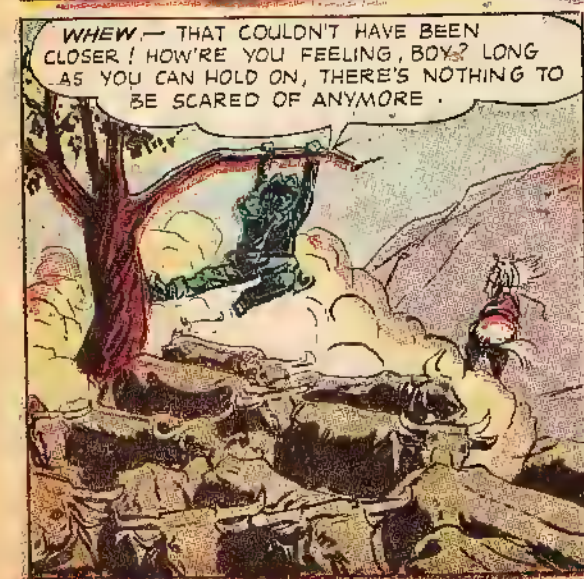




THE MOTIONLESS RIDER IS SMILING AGAIN.



BUT THEN —



HE'S SKEERED OF YOUR GUNS! HE WAS NO MOREN FOUR YEARS OLE WHEN HE SAW HIS PA GUNNED DOWN—BEEN TERRIBLE GUN-SHY EVER SINCE. LIVES ON THUH RANCH WITH HIS UNCLE, CLEM RUPPERT. I'M FOREMAN... THAR'S CLEM NOW!



WHUT HAPPENED HERE, BRAD? WHAR'S BOBBY?

THET NĒPHEW OF YOUR'N ALMOST GOT HISSELF KILLED. DISMOUNTED AN' WALKED RIGHT IN THUH PATH OF THUH HERD... IF NOT FER THIS HERE STRANGER, WE'D STILL BE PICKIN' UP THUH PIECES!



I'M REAL OBLIGED... WAL, I'LL BE—IT'S **BILLY THUH KID!** I SHOULD'VE KNOWN WHO'D BE THE ONLY GALOOT WITH NERVE ENOUGH TO CUT ACROSS A STAMPEDIN' HERD... BOBBY, I WANT YUH TO MEET AN OLD FRIEND OF MINE!

IT WASN'T MUCH, I'VE BEEN HEADING THIS WAY, CLEM, EVER SINCE I HEARD YOU WERE HAVING TROUBLE...



A HEAP OF TROUBLE, BILLY. MORE RUSTLERS IN THESE PARTS THAN THAR'S PRAIRIE GRASS. I'VE BEEN TRYIN' TO ORGANIZE THUH RANCHERS AGAINST 'EM, BUT FOLKS ARE SKEERED STIFF!



THAT NIGHT, AT CLEM RUPPERT'S RANCH, A SHADOWY FIGURE SLIPPED FURTIVELY OUT OF THE BUNKHOUSE, AND RODE OFF...



HE DIDN'T PULL REIN TILL HE REACHED THE RUSTLER'S HIDEOUT!

BRAD, WHUT'RE YOU DOIN' HERE? YORE JOB IS OVER AT RUPPERT'S, SOFTENIN' HIM UP...

I GOT BAD NEWS, BOSS!



I STAMPED THUH NORTH HERD TODAY—FIGGERED 90 KILL THET GUN-SHY NĒPHEW OF RUPPERT'S, SO WE COULD CLEAN OUT ALL HIS STOCK WHILE HE WAS IN MOURNIN'... BUT **BILLY THUH KID** SHOWED UP TO SAVE THUH BOY! AND **THUH KID'S** STAYIN' ON WITH RUPPERT!



THAT SHORE IS BAD NEWS! THUH KID'S A MAVERICK! NEVER KIN TELL WHUT HE'LL DO OR WHO HE'LL SIDE WITH! LONG AS HE'S IN THUH TERRITORY, NONE OF US IS SAFE! WE HAVETA GIT RID OF THUH KID!

BUT HOW?



BUT HOW...? THOSE TWO WORDS KEPT ECHOING THROUGH THE RUSTLERS' HIDEOUT...



AND ECHOED TOO IN THE MINDS OF ALL THESE MEN WHO KNEW AND FEARED THE DEATH-DEALING SIX-SHOOTERS OF BILLY THE KID.

THEN THE ECHO DIED OUT...

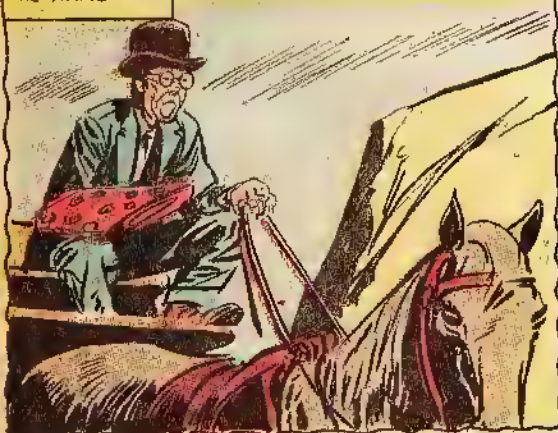
HMMM — ONLY ONE MAN I KNOW OF COULD HANDLE THE KID — AN' THAT'S NED BLACK!

BLACK? NEVER HEARD OF HIM.

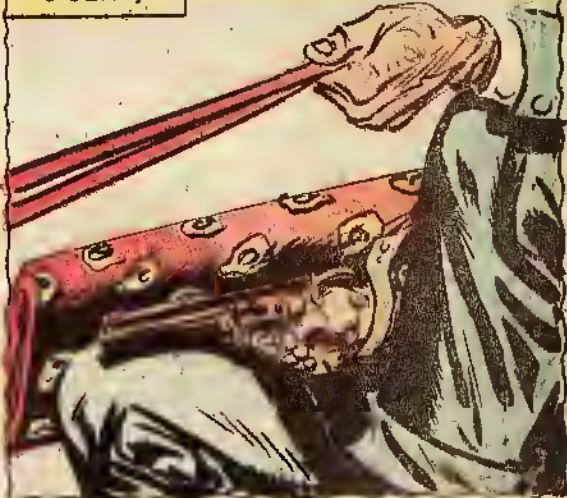
THAT'S WHUT MAKES BLACK SO DANGEROUS AIN'T IT? HE'S THUH LAST MAN IN THE WORLD ANYBODY'D TAKE FER A GUN-MAN...



HE'S A SHRIVELED-UP HALF-PINT. GOES AROUND WITH A BUCKBOARD, MAKIN' OUT HE'S A PEDDLER. WEARS FAKE GLASSES AN' EVERYTHIN'. AN' HE ALWAYS CARRIES A BOLT OF CALICO CLOTH OVER HIS HAND...



IT'S UNDER THET CALICO THET HE CARRIES HIS GUN!

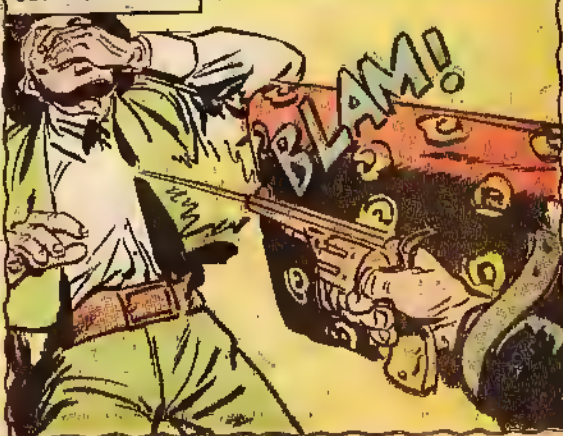


IT'S HIS LOOKIN' SO PEACEABLE THET THROWS FOLKS OFF GUARD. HE'LL WALK RIGHT UP TO YUH WITH A SCHOOLMARM SMILE ON HIS FACE.

CARE TO SEE SOME PRETTY CALICO CLOTH FER THUH MISSUS?



AN' YUH'RE EITHER REACHIN' FER THUH CALICO TO FEEL IT WITH YORE FINGERS... OR YUH'RE PREPARING TO TELL HIM YORE WOMAN DOES HER OWN CALICO-BUYIN' — WHEN ALL OF A SUDDEN...



BLACK'S NEVER FAILED ON A GUNNIN'-DOWN JOB YET! MATTER OF FACT - HE WAS THUH ONE WHO SHOT THUH PA OF THET GUN-SHY NEPHEW OF RUPPERT'S BACK IN WACO! HEH-HEH-HEH - SMALL WORLD, AIN'T IT?



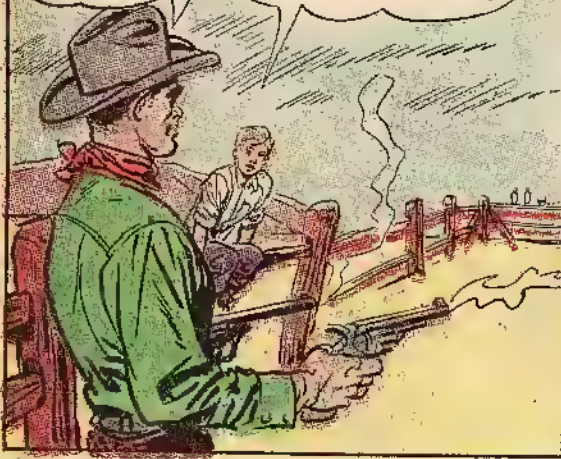
DOES THUH KID. KNOW HIM? THEN WHUTRE WE WAITIN' FER? I'LL SEND WORD TONIGHT AN' THUH CALICO PEDDLER WILL BE HERE INSIDE TWO WEEKS!



TWO WEEKS LATER, THERE WAS THE SOUND OF GUNFIRE BEHIND THE BUNKHOUSE AT RUPPERT'S PLACE...



THAT'S IT, BOBBY! YOU DIDN'T FLINCH THAT TIME WHEN I SHOT!



I KIN WATCH WITHOUT BEING TOO SCARED, BUT WILL I EVER BE ABLE TO HOLD A GUN...?

THAT'S WHAT WE'RE WORKING TOWARD, BOBBY. MAYBE, SOME DAY, A BOY'LL BE ABLE TO GROW UP HERE IN THE WEST WITHOUT EVER HAVING TO BUCKLE ON A GUNBELT... BUT THATS NOT HOW IT IS TODAY. THE LAND'S STILL TOO WILD - THERE ARE TOO MANY SIDEWINDERS ON THE PROWL...



AND IT'S NOT ONLY SHOOTING YOU HAVE TO LEARN, BOBBY. YOU HAVE TO BE ABLE TO SENSE WHEN YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO SHOOT! YOU DO THAT BY WATCHING THE HITCH OF A MAN'S SHOULDER OR THE WAY HIS HAND STRAYS TOWARD HIS HOLSTER - OR BY SPOTTING ANY-



THING AT ALL THAT ADDS UP TO HIS TRYING TO SNEAK WITHIN GUN RANGE...

THE KID WAS STILL TALKING EARNESTLY WHEN A PEDDLER IN A BUCKBOARD ROUNDED THE BEND AND RATTLED SLOWLY TOWARD THE RANCH...



THE PEDDLER WAS A
SHRIVELED-UP HALF-
PINT...



HE WORE GLASSES?



WITH ONE HAND, HE
HELD THE REINS...



A BOLT OF CALICO
CLOTH COVERED HIS
OTHER HAND!



HEY, LOOK—
A PEDDLER!

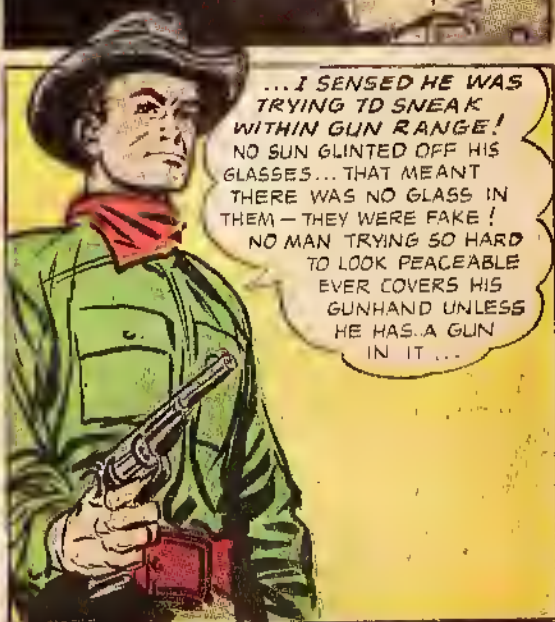
YEAH... I
SEE HIM...



DWWW!
MY
SHOULDER!

WH-WHY'D YOU
SHOOT? HOW DID
YOU
KNOW?

JUST LIKE
I WAS TELLING
YOU, BOBBY...



... I SENSED HE WAS
TRYING TO SNEAK
WITHIN GUN RANGE!
NO SUN GLINTED OFF HIS
GLASSES... THAT MEANT
THERE WAS NO GLASS IN
THEM—THEY WERE FAKE!
NO MAN TRYING SO HARD
TO LOOK PEACEABLE
EVER COVERS HIS
GUNHAND UNLESS
HE HAS A GUN
IN IT...



hands tied?

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Mrs. Christina Poole
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**Mail coupon today for
FREE sample lesson**

American School, Dept. AS-3

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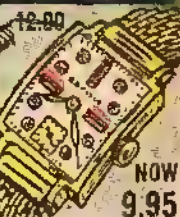
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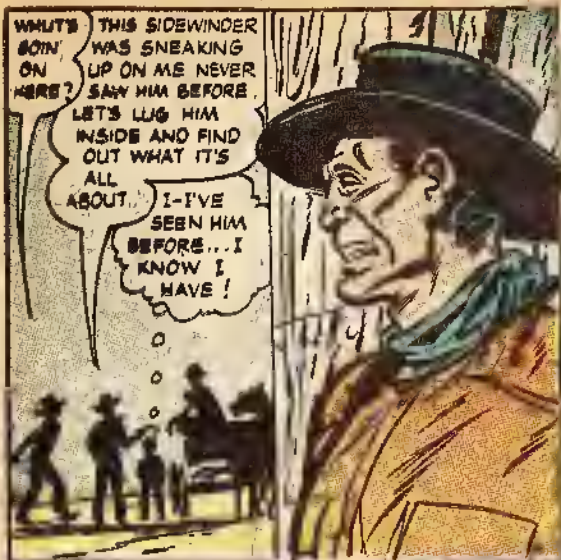
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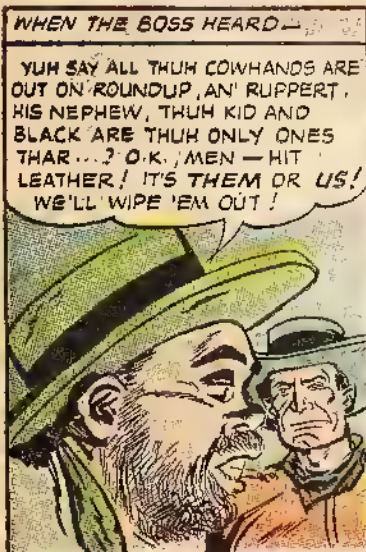


WHUT'S
GOIN'
ON
HERE?
THIS SIDEWINDER
WAS SNEAKING
UP ON ME NEVER
SAW HIM BEFORE.
LET'S LUG HIM
INSIDE AND FIND
OUT WHAT IT'S
ALL
ABOUT.

I-I'VE
SEEN HIM
BEFORE... I
KNOW I
HAVE!



BLACK KNOWS WHAR OUR HIDEOUT IS... AN'
EVERYTHIN'! IF THUH KID MAKES HIM TALK,
THUH WHOLE RUSTLIN' SET-UP'LL GO UP IN
'SMOKE! THUH BOSS'LL HAVETA HEAR ABOUT
THIS REAL
PRONTO!



WHEN THE BOSS HEARD —

YUH SAY ALL THUH COWHANDS ARE
OUT ON 'ROUNDUP, AN' RUPPERT,
HIS NEPHEW, THUH KID AND
BLACK ARE THUH ONLY ONES
THAR...? O.K., MEN — HIT
LEATHER! IT'S THEM OR US!
WE'LL WIPE 'EM OUT!



WE'LL OPEN FIRE FROM THUH
FRONT, BRAD! ONCE THEY
START SHOOTIN' BACK, YOU
GO AROUND THUH SIDE AN'
POT THEM THROUGH
A WINDOW!



LATER, BACK AT THE RANCH —

TOUGH
LITTLE
HOMBRE —
COULDN'T
MAKE
HIM
TALK!

NOTHING TO
DO NOW
BUT GO TO
SLEEP. HE'S
ALL TRUSSED
UP. CAN'T
MAKE ANY
MORE TROUBLE
TONIGHT...

IF I
COULD
ONLY
REMEM-
BER
WHERE
I SAW
HIM
BEFORE...

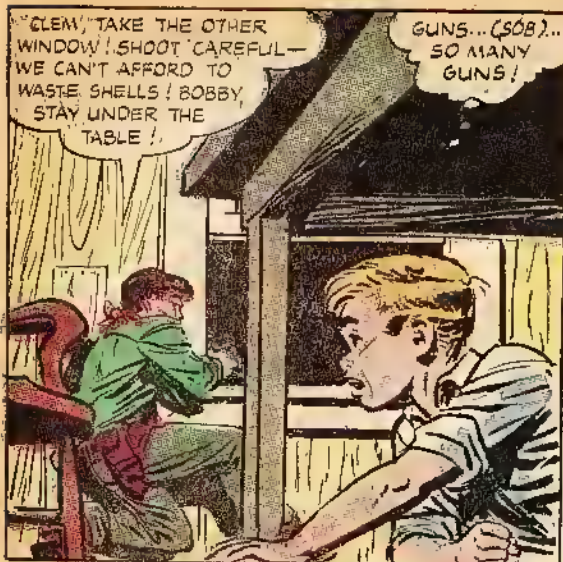


JUST THEN —

ANYBODY HIT? YOU TWO
STAY DOWN! I'M GETTING
OVER BY THE WINDOW!

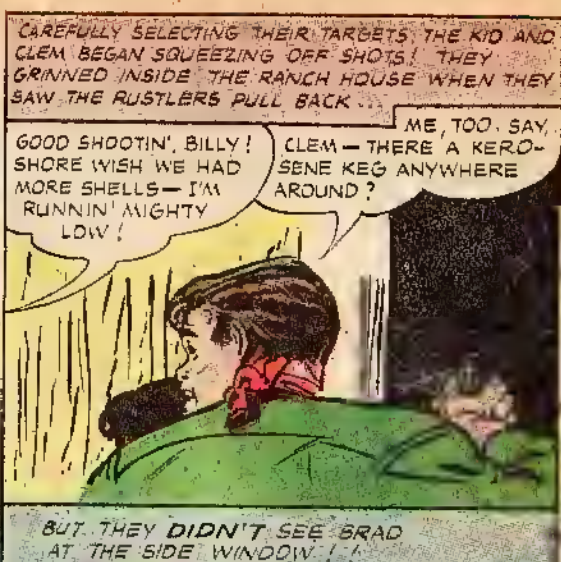


KEEP FIRIN' MEN —
WE'LL HAVE ROAST
RANCHER TONIGHT!



"CLEM, TAKE THE OTHER WINDOW! SHOOT CAREFUL—WE CAN'T AFFORD TO WASTE SHELLS! BOBBY, STAY UNDER THE TABLE!"

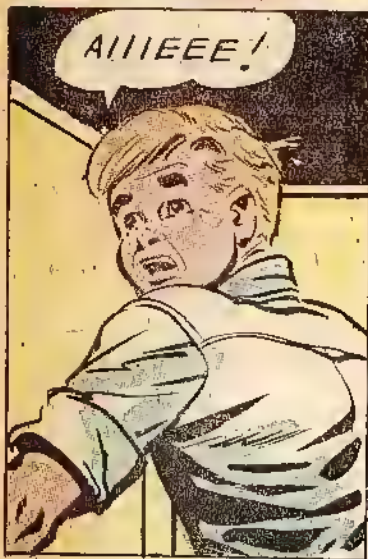
GUNS... (SOB)... SO MANY GUNS!



GOOD SHOOTIN', BILLY! SHORE WISH WE HAD MORE SHELLS—I'M RUNNIN' MAIGHTY LOW!

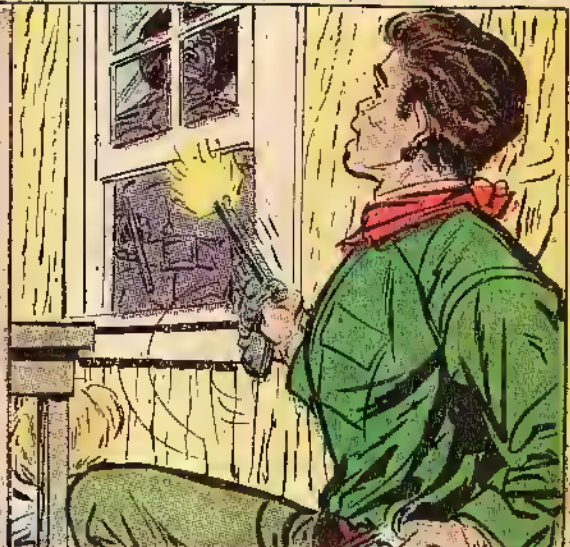
ME, TOO, SAY, CLEM—THERE A KEROSENE KEG ANYWHERE AROUND?

BUT THEY DIDN'T SEE BRAD AT THE SIDE WINDOW!



AAAAIEEE!

THE KID WAS SQUEEZING TRIGGER EVEN AS HE WHIRLED IN RESPONSE TO BOBBY'S SCREAM, HIS SIX-SHOOTERS SPITTING A DEADLY STREAM OF BULLETS THAT CAUGHT BRAD FULL IN THE CHEST!



A FEW MINUTES LATER, WHILE THE RUSTLERS WERE REGROUPING IN THE DISTANCE, THE KID CRAWLED OUT UNDER, 'DARKNESS', DRAGGING A HEAVY KEG AFTER HIM...



THEY GOT BRAD! WE'LL HAVE TO CHARGE THEM AGAIN! WHEN I YELL, **SHOOT**, I WANT EVERY LAST ONE OF YUH SHOOTIN' SO MUCH LEAD THAT THAR WON'T BE A CHANCE OF MISSIN' EM...



AS THE RUSTLERS GALLOPED FORWARD, NO SHOTS CAME FROM THE RANCH. THERE WERE NO SIGNS OF LIFE, EXCEPT FOR A SMALL FLICKERING LIGHT BEHIND ONE OF THE WINDOWS.



SHOOT!

IT WAS HAILING BULLETS WHEN THE KID THREW THE FLAMING TORCH AT THE LINE OF KEROSENE HE'D LAID IN THE YARD!



IN A SECOND, THE FLARING KEROSENE DIED DOWN, BUT THE WALL OF FIRE HAD ALREADY DONE ITS DAMAGE!

THE BOSS'S DAID — HIS NECK CRACKED!

MAKE FER THUH BORDER, MEN!



BUT INSIDE THE RANCH HOUSE ALL WAS NOT WELL. CLEM RUPPERT LAY BLEEDING, HIS FOREHEAD CREASED BY A RICOCHET... THE KID HAD BEEN KNOCKED COLD BY A FALLING LAMP.



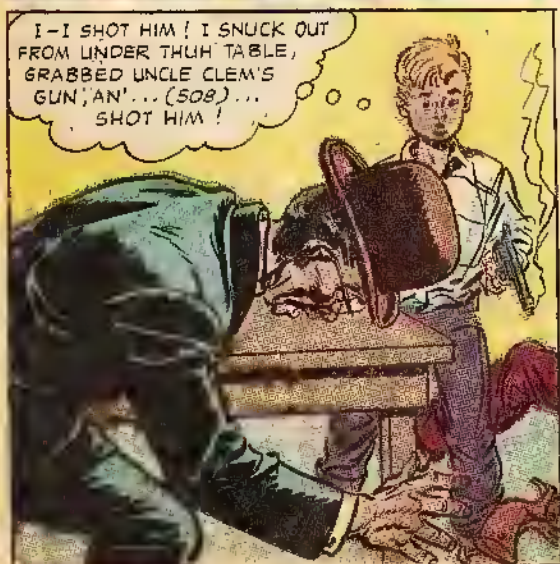
AND NED BLACK, WHO HAD TWISTED HIMSELF FREE DURING THE RUCKUS, WAS COMING TOWARD THEM!

THEY HIRED ME TO GUN YUH DOWN, KID — AND I'VE NEVER FAILED ON A JOB YET...

I KNOW WHERE I SAW HIM BEFORE! HE'S THE MAN WHO KILLED MY PA!



I—I SHOT HIM! I SNUCK OUT FROM UNDER THUH TABLE, GRABBED UNCLE CLEM'S GUN, AN'... (508)... SHOT HIM!



THE KID WAS RIGHT! THE LAND WAS STILL TOO WILD! BOYS GROWING INTO MEN...

I'M NOT AFRAID OF GUNS ANYMORE!



...HAD TO BUCKLE ON GUNBELTS!

THE PRINCE ALBERT KID

By BENTON RICE

WINSTON CITY was overflowing with people, wagons, horses, and trouble. For at the end of the week the United States Government was going to open a section of former Indian territory for the homesteader. You didn't have to eavesdrop to hear what was being said. People just had to shout to be heard above the noise of the creaking wagons on the main street. "Hope to get some good farm land," remarked a man from New England. "My land back east was all worked out. Sold everything I had." And an old prospector added, "Bones gettin' too old for farmin'. My old mule wouldn't pull a plow." But the main topic of conversation centered around one theme. *There are four points to the compass. Just where was the government going to open the land. To the North, South, East or West?*

A man dismounted his horse and tied his animal to the hitching rail in front of *The Elegant Hotel*. He was tall and had a small moustache that just reached over the sides of his thin lips. He wore a black sombrero, black Prince Albert, and gray trousers pulled down over a pair of highly polished black boots. He entered the hotel and started walking up the stairs. The clerk shouted, "Hey, where do you think you are going? Are you..." and then he stopped as he recognized the Prince Albert Kid.

The clerk quickly apologized. "Sorry I didn't recognize you. Light is bad. We got to protect Mr. Underhill. Sheriff is outside his room waiting for you."

Sheriff Ben Turner was relieved when he saw the Prince Albert Kid.

"Good thing you got here. There's been two attempts on Mr. Underhill's life. And about five times some cuss has tried to steal the land schedule. Feel mighty happy the government sent you here."

"The Prince Albert Kid is here," the sheriff announced, as he knocked at Mr. Underhill's door. "Now I can go home and

get some rest. Just let anyone try anything from now on. They'll be mighty sorry they ever started."

John Underhill motioned to his visitor to be seated as he himself sat down on the bed. "It's been like a terrible nightmare with the land schedule in my possession. My life just isn't worth a cent to some people. If they knew which section of land the government planned to open they could sell the information and make a fortune. The end of the week can't get here to soon for me."

The Prince Albert Kid smiled. "Now that I'm here I think you can do a bit of relaxing. After all, you've had a tough year surveying the land and deciding which was the best to open to the public. Where is the schedule?" The tired surveyor put his hand inside his shirt and took off a cloth money belt. He opened it and handed the Prince Albert Kid a document which was wrapped in silken oiled cloth. The West's famous man of action opened it and read the contents. Then he returned the land schedule and said, "You keep on wearing it in that money belt. Now we are going out for a bit of air."

The two walked down the stairs and out of the hotel. Side by side they walked without talking. As they passed a saloon, a group of noisy, drunken men came up to them. A tall, red-headed man looked at John Underhill. "Here's that government surveyor," he snarled. "We oughta string him up and make him tell us which section they are going to open. Bet if I filled him with some lead he might loosen his tongue." As though to carry out the second part of his threat he went for his gun.

With lightning speed, the Prince Albert Kid drew his two guns and a startled group of men saw the muzzles of two deadly .45's pointing in their direction. "If you go for your gun you'll never live to get it out of the holster," warned the man behind the

two Colts. The red-headed stranger beat a hasty retreat. "Just havin' a little fun, mister. Didn't mean anything by it." And as he spoke he quickly withdrew his hand from the direction of his holster.

"I'm not exactly a coward," suggested John Underhill, "but if this keeps up, I may get a heart attack. Let's go back." The Prince Albert Kid agreed and they returned to the hotel.

When they got to the room, the Prince Albert Kid took the key from young Underhill and placed it in the lock. He turned it to the left to open the door. Nothing clicked. Then he turned the key to the right and heard the click. Again he turned the key. "This door was closed when we left. Now it's open. Something's happened. You get back to the side while I kick the door open." With his body against the wall, he kicked the door open.

Two loud reports greeted the men. On the table was a double barreled shot gun. "What a contraption," said the Prince Albert Kid. "Someone figured to murder both of us. And then what?"

As he turned around the clerk of the hotel, Walter Pierson, was in the room. "Heard the shots and ran right up," he said almost breathlessly. "What happened?" The clerk saw the gun of death and that was an answer in itself. "Oh," he groaned.

That evening, the Prince Albert Kid tried to figure out a puzzle. "It doesn't make sense," he admitted half aloud. "This attempt to kill us. Just how did our would-be murderer expect to benefit? Putting us out of the way would give him the information. Or would it?" A little smile began to play on his lips and it was evident he felt he had the key to the puzzle. But getting evidence would be another thing.

The next morning there was a visitor to see the Prince Albert Kid. He was the red-headed man who almost had started something. "My name is Jeff Giles," he said. "and I am mighty 'shamed of the way I acted. Heard about the attempt to kill both of you. Only a polecat would try something like that. If there is anything I can do to make amends, just call on me."

The Prince Albert Kid studied the face of Jeff Giles carefully. He had to decide if the man could be trusted. "There is something you can do. We must find out

who tried to kill us because they probably will do it again. And if there's one fellow I don't want to wish success — he's my would-be killer."

Late that evening the lobby of the hotel was deserted. The clerk sat with his eyes fixed on the staircase. With anger clearly written all over his face, Jeff Giles rushed into the hotel. "Where you going?" asked the clerk. "To kill those two fellows upstairs. If the Prince Albert Kid thinks he can make a fool out of me, he's got another thought comin' to him." Jeff went for his gun and it was soon in his right hand. "I'm going to knock on the door and when it opens, I'll finish them both off."

The clerk watched Jeff Giles walk upstairs. His keen ears heard a knock on the door. Then the door opened. There were two shots. A body fell to the floor. Then the anguished voice of the Prince Albert Kid moaned, "You killed both of us." And another body fell to the floor.

The clerk dashed upstairs to the room. Jeff Giles was looking at the two figures on the floor. The gun was in his hand. "Give me that gun," ordered the clerk. The command was obeyed. The clerk held Jeff's gun in his right hand. Then with his left hand he went for his own derringer. "I'm going to kill you right now," he announced. "Why?" pleaded Jeff. "It's your job to turn me over to the sheriff."

The clerk laughed. "I'll be a hero by killing you. And at the same time I'll get that land schedule from Underhill's body. And I will . . ." But he never finished those words. The corpse of the Prince Albert Kid turned over and threw the clerk to the floor. Then the closet door opened and Sheriff Ben Turner took charge of his prisoner. "Mighty warm in that closet," said the sheriff.

It was a week after the government opened the north section to the public that the sheriff came to the point. "How did you really know it was the clerk behind all the trouble?"

"Easy," replied the Prince Albert Kid. "He would have been the first up if we were killed. In fact he was the first up when the gun he set up fired. And it could only have been someone with a key. He was so nervous he left the door unlocked. Thanks to Jeff Giles we trapped him."

THE END

The SILVER TONGUE of DEATH



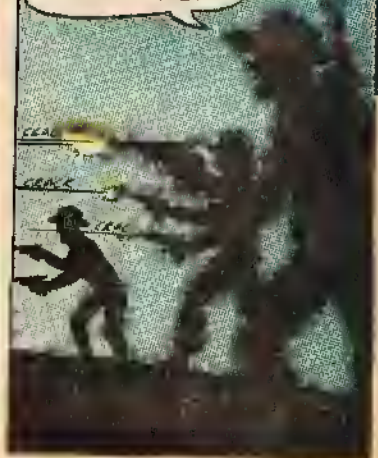
FOLKS AROUND HERE IN DOUGLAS CITY STILL TALK OF THE TIME BILLY THE KID UNLOADED HIS SIX-SHOOTERS AND DROPPED THEM DOWN A WELL. THEY SAY DEATH GRINNED WHEN IT HAPPENED BECAUSE DEATH KNEW THAT WITHOUT THE KID'S GUNS TO HOLD OWLHOOTS IN CHECK THERE'D BE ENOUGH SHOOTING AND KILLING TO KEEP HIM BUSY FOR A LONG LONG TIME TO COME...

IT ALL STARTED WITH A PASSEL OF GUNHANDS CRAWLING TOWARD A LOVELY RANCH HOUSE ONE STARLESS NIGHT...

(WHEN I GIVE THUH WORD, EVERYBODY GIT UP ON YORE FEET, AN' START POURIN' LEAD!)



KEEP MOVIN' UP MEN— THUH YELLOW NESTER AIN'T GOT GUTS ENOUGH TO ANSWER FIRE!



BUT THEN—DRAWN BY THE GUNHANDS' YELLS AND THEIR GUNFIRE, A RIDER CAME GALLOPING UP OUT OF THE NIGHT!



HIS GUNS BLURRED IN A MOTION THAT WAS FASTER THAN AN EYE BLINKING IN A SANDSTORM!



MAKE TRACKS, MEN! IT'S BILLY THE KID!!

LIKE THE SNAKES THEY WERE, THE GUNHANDS SLITHERED BACK TO THEIR TETHERED HORSES...

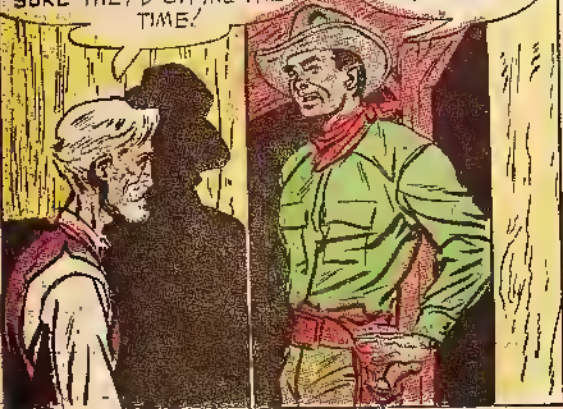
WITH THUH KID ON THE SIDE OF THUH NESTERS...(GASP)...THUH DEACON'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO CLEAR THEM OUT OF THUH VALLEY!



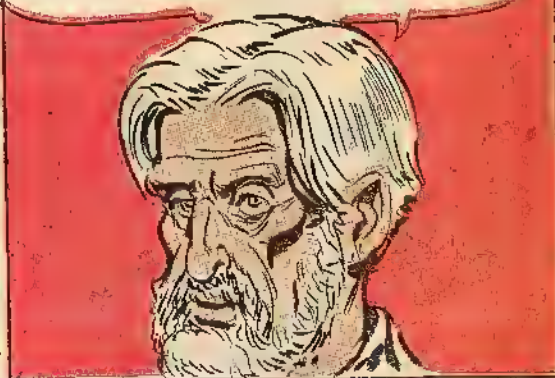
BACK AT THE RANCH HOUSE...

THANKS FER DRIVIN' THEM OFF, MISTER. THUH DEACON MUST'VE SENT THEM. I THOUGHT FER SURE THEY'D GIT ME THIS TIME!

WASN'T MUCH, WHERE'RE YOUR GUNS, MAN? HOW COME YOU DIDN'T SHOOT BACK AT THEM?

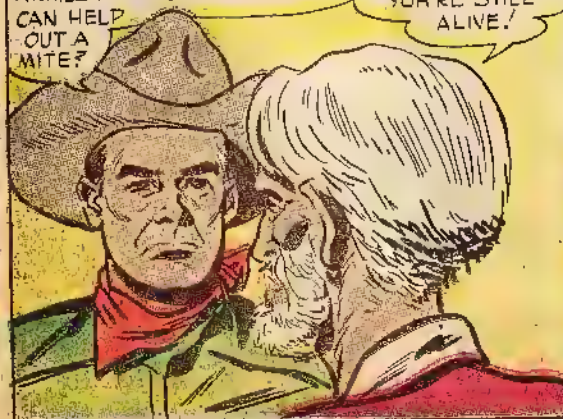


THUH DEACON DONT WANT NESTERS ON HIS / GRAZIN' LAND. HE'S FIRED MY BARN, SKEERED OFF MY HANDS, AN' TONIGHT HIS MEN CAME TO KILL ME. WHEN I HEARD THEM A-WHOOPIN' AN' A-SHOOTIN' OUTSIDE, I SAID TO MYSELF, 'OLD LEM, YUH MIGHT AS WELL STOP A BULLET RIGHT NOW. THAR'S NO USE FIGHTIN' BACK...'



NO MAN'S LICKED UNLESS HE CAVES IN FIRST. SOUNDS TO ME LIKE YOU'VE BEEN FIGHTING BY YOURSELF TOO LONG... MIND IF I SETTLE DOWN AWHILE HEARABOUTS TO SEE IF I CAN HELP OUT A MITE?

AIN'T NO USE, I'M TELLIN' YUH! GIT RIDIN'! CLEAR THUH VALLEY WHILE YUH'RE STILL ALIVE!



SO BILLY KEPT RIDING, BUT HE AIMED TO PULL REIN SOON, AT DOUGLAS CITY JUST AT THE EDGE OF THE VALLEY. AND EVEN WHILE HE WAS RIDING THE GUNHANDS WERE REPORTING HIS COMING TO THEIR BOSS!

THINK YUH CAN HANDLE HIM, DEACON?

THE KID WILL BE LIKE PUTTY IN MY HANDS. AND AFTER HE'S OUT OF THE WAY, I'LL LEAD THE NEXT RAID ON OLD LEM MYSELF!



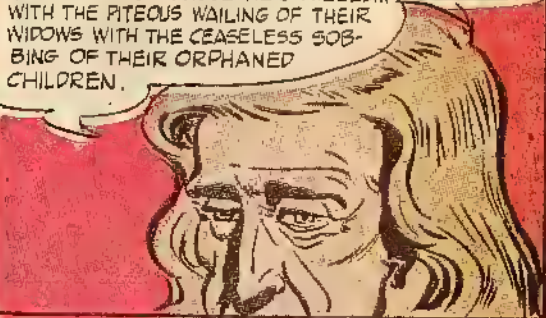
THE NEXT DAY BILLY WAS WALKING OUT OF THE HOTEL AT DOUGLAS CITY WHEN THE DEACON HAILED HIM.

I WANT A WORD WITH YOU, YOUNG MAN!



FOLKS CALLED HIM DEACON BECAUSE HE HAD A SILVER TONGUE—A WAY OF SPEECHIFYING THAT COULD MAKE A HORNE TOAD BELIEVE IT WAS THE QUEEN OF SHEBA. BUT THE HEART INSIDE OF HIM WAS AS BLACK AS THE CLOTHES HE ALWAYS WORE—AND WHEN HE BORE DOWN ON A MAN WITH HIS HONEYED WORDS, IT WAS ALWAYS TO DO EVIL...

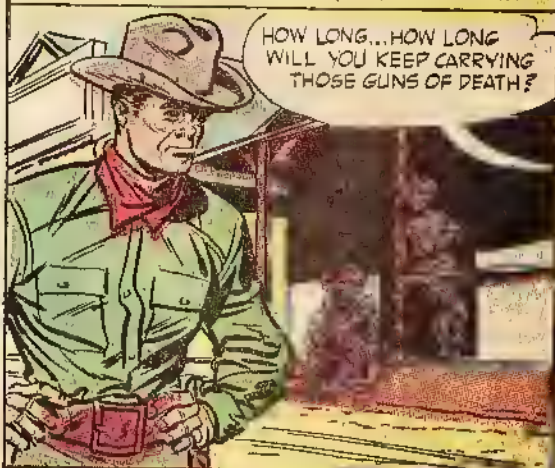
HOW LONG CAN A MAN LIVE BY THE GUN? HOW LONG BEFORE HIS NIGHTS ARE CROWDED WITH THE SCREAMING GHOSTS OF THOSE HE'S KILLED... WITH THE PITEOUS WAILING OF THEIR WIDOWS WITH THE CEASELESS SOB-BING OF THEIR ORPHANED CHILDREN.



AS BILLY LISTENED, HIS EYES GLAZED OVER—AND THE DEACON'S WORDS KEPT SPINNING A WEB AROUND HIM. THE DEACON KEPT SPEECHIFYING, AND BILLY COULD NOT HELP BUT THINK SORROWFULLY BACK TO SOME OF THE MEN HE'D HAD TO KILL... AMBUSHERS, RUSTLERS AND JUST PLAIN COLD-BLOODED MURDERERS WHOM THE LAW COULDN'T BRING TO JUSTICE.



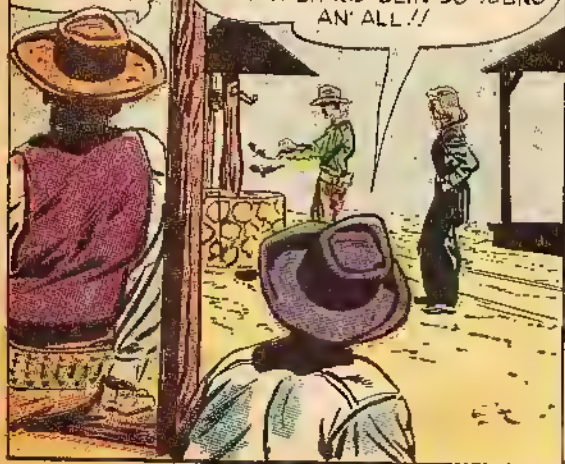
BILLY FROWNED. HE'D KILLED THEM, TRUE... BUT THE WEST WAS STILL WILD AND THEY'D HAD IT COMING TO... ALL OF A SUDDEN BILLY'S EYES NARROWED...



HOW LONG... HOW LONG WILL YOU KEEP CARRYING THOSE GUNS OF DEATH?

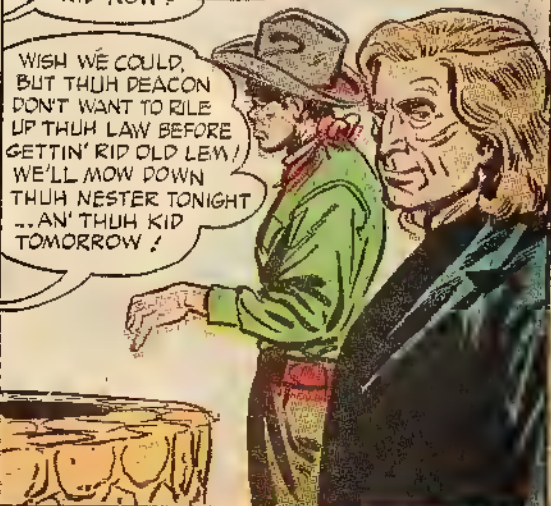
LOOK! THUH KID'S TOOK THUH GUNS FROM HIS HOLSTERS!

I KNEW THUH DEACON'D BE ABLE TO BAMBOOZLE HIM! WITH HIS SILVER TONGUE... AN' THUH KID BEIN' SO YOUNG AN' ALL!!



WHAT'LL WE DO—KILL THUH KID NOW?

WISH WE COULD, BUT THUH DEACON DON'T WANT TO RILE UP THUH LAW BEFORE GETTIN' RID OLD LEM! WE'LL MOW DOWN THUH NESTER TONIGHT... AN' THUH KID TOMORROW!



SO BILLY TURNED AND CLUMPED UP LIKE A SLEEP-WALKER TO HIS HOTEL ROOM, WITH HIS HOLSTERS HANGING EMPTY ON HIS BELT. A SECOND AFTER HE WAS INSIDE THE ROOM...



...A GUNHAND TOOK UP POST OUT IN THE HALL!

YES SIREE... IT SURE LOOKED LIKE BILLY HAD BEEN SPELLBOUND BY THE CRAFTY DEACON, AND HAD GIVEN UP FIGHTING FOREVER...

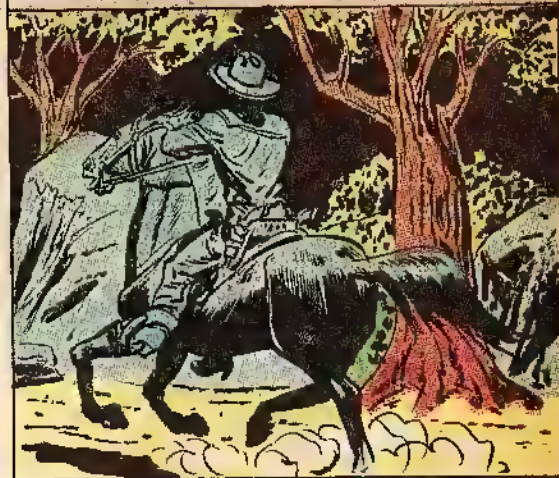


IN THAT CASE WHO SAPPED THE GUNHAND ON POST IN THE HOTEL HALL??

SOON AS IT GOT DARK, THE DEACON AND HIS GUNHANDS HIT LEATHER AND BEGAN RIDING HARD FOR THE LONELY RANCH HOUSE!



AND WHO WAS THE MAN WHO MOUNTED UP AND TOOK THE ARROYO TRAIL TO HEAD OFF THE DEACON AND HIS GUNHANDS??



THE ARROYO WAS A SHORT-CUT THAT JOIN THE WINDING TRAIL AT THE EDGE OF LOST MAN'S FORREST AND WHEN THE OWLHOOTS CAME GALLOPING UP, THE MAN WAS WAITING FOR THEM...

THE DEACON'S THE LEAD-RIDER! I'LL LET THEM ALL GO BY...



...EXCEPT FOR THE LAST ONE.



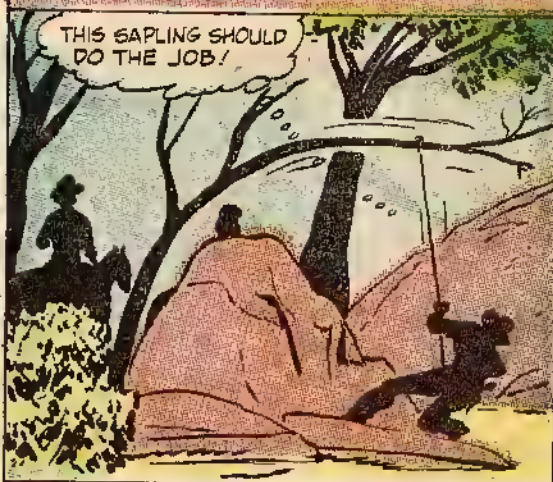
THAT'S ONE DOWN AND FOUR TO GO!



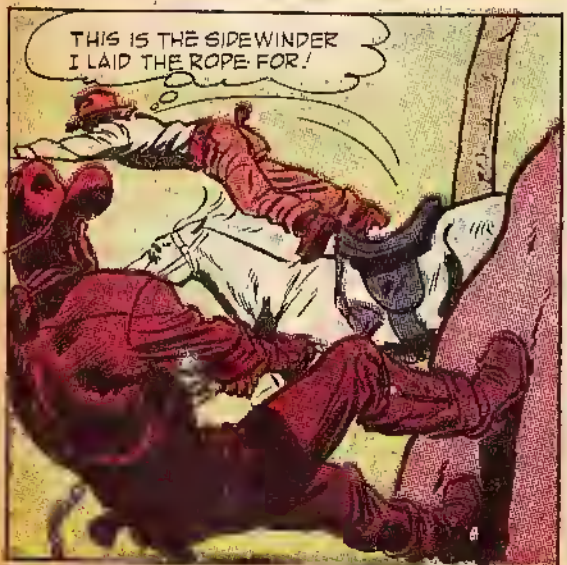
HE WAITED FOR A CLEARING SO HE'D HAVE ENOUGH SPACE OVERHEAD FOR A ROPE THROW...



THE MAN HAD CUT THROUGH THE TREES, AND AGAIN HE WAS AHEAD OF THE OWLHOOTS WHO WERE FOLLOWING THE MAIN TRAIL.

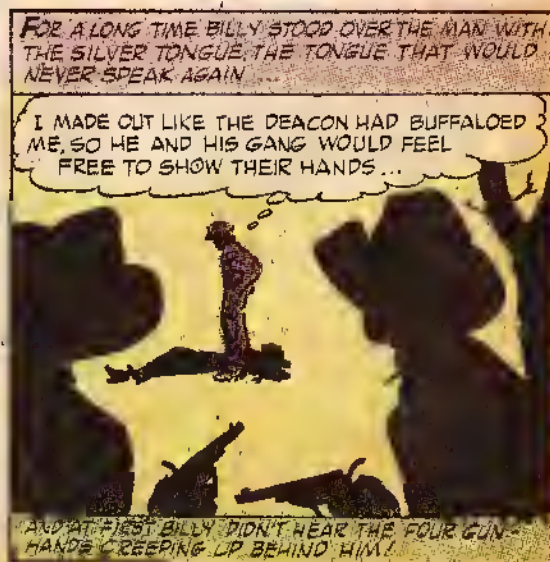
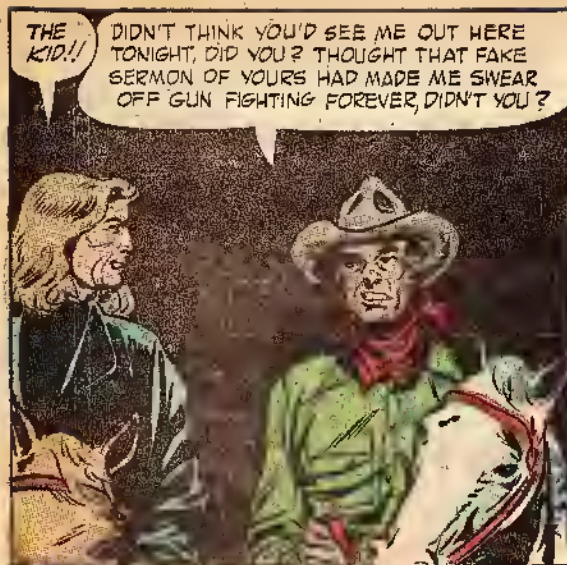


THE MAIN TRAIL KEPT WINDING IN AND OUT THROUGH THE TREES...AND THE MYSTERY RIDER HAD NO TROUBLE GETTING AHEAD OF THE OWLHOOTS A THIRD TIME!

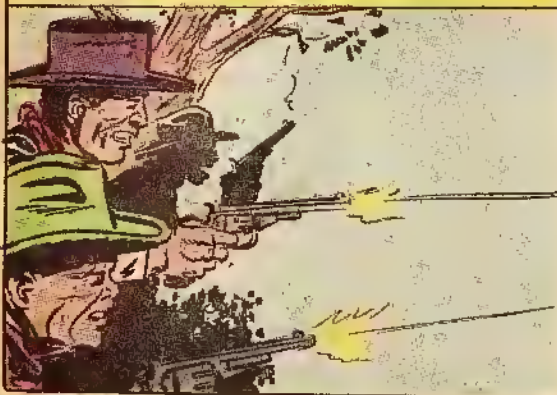


NOW ONLY THE MYSTERY RIDER AND THE DEACON WERE LEFT! AND WHEN THE DEACON PULLED REIN NEAR THE LONELY RANCH HOUSE, HE TURNED TO GIVE FINAL ORDERS TO HIS GUNHANDS HE SAW AT LAST WHO HAD PULLED REIN AT HIS SIDE.





THEY WERE THE ONES HE'D KNOCKED DOWN BACK ON THE FOREST TRAIL, FIGURING THEY'D BE OUT COLD LONG ENOUGH FOR HIM TO TAKE CARE OF THE DEACON, THEN RETURN FOR THEM LATER. BUT THE NEED FOR SILENCE HAD BEEN TOO GREAT AND HE HADN'T SLUGGED THEM HARD ENOUGH!



IT WAS HAILING BULLETS WHEN BILLY DROVE FOR THE GROUND! LEAD WAS RAISING DUST ALL AROUND HIM.



BILLY WAS RETURNING FIRE NOW! BUT THEY WERE IN THE SHADOWS, AND SPREADING OUT FAST! HOW LONG COULD ONE MAN WHO WAS A CLEAR TARGET HOLD OUT AGAINST BLAZING SHADOWY GUNS??



A SLUG BIT INTO HIS SHOULDER! ANOTHER GRAZED HIS CHEEK...

BUT THEN...

WHAT THE...?



THEY HAD STOPPED FIRING! THEY WERE ALL DEAD!

I DON'T GET IT! THOSE TWO ON THE END... I DIDN'T EVEN SHOOT AT THEM!



I HELPED YUH OUT, MISTER. THOSE WORDS YUH SAID LAST NIGHT... ABOUT A MAN NOT BEIN' BEAT 'LESS HE CAVES IN HISSELF... THEY SET ME TO THINKIN'! AN' WHEN I HEARD THUH RUCKUS OUT HERE JUST NOW, I TORE OUT OF THUH HOUSE WITH BOTH GUNS BLAZIN'!



OLD LEM AND THE OTHER NESTERS STAYED ON IN THE VALLEY. AFTER THAT THERE WAS NO MORE TROUBLE. TOO BAD BILLY COULDN'TVE STAYED.



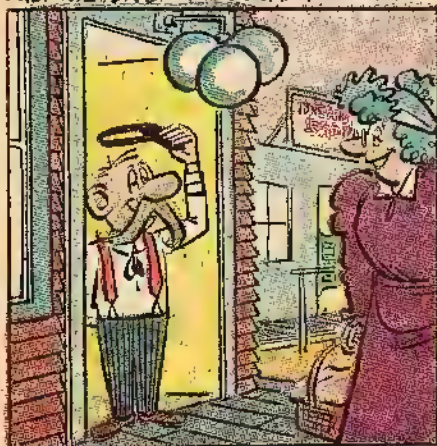
...BUT BILLY WAS A LONER, AND OUTSIDE THE LAW. BILLY ALWAYS HAD TO RIDE ALONE, LEAVING BEHIND HIM ONLY THE GOOD DEEDS HE'D DONE.

THE END

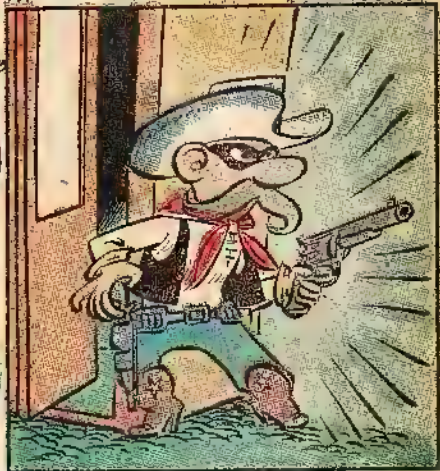
THE LOAN ARRANGER

TO ALL OUTWARD APPEARANCES ZEBE SKINFLINT IS THE OL' KINDLY PROPRIETOR OF THE LOCAL PAWN SHOP.

HIS NAME MAKES MEN SHAKE WITH FEAR--THE LOAN ARRANGER.



--- BUT A QUICK CHANGE OF HIS COSTUME AND---



ALL RIGHT, HOMBRES, REACH FOR THE SKY!

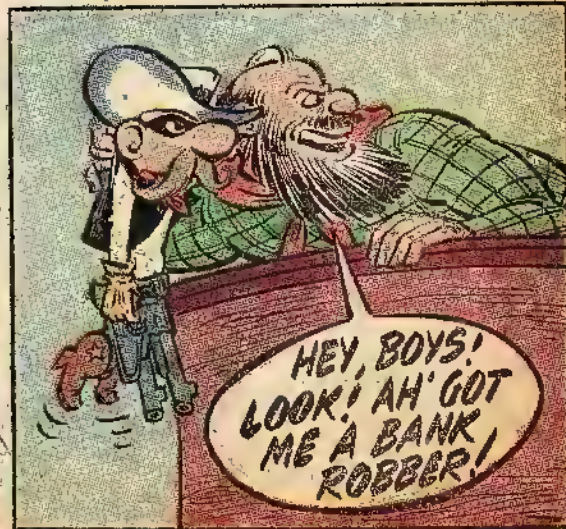


AH SAID THIS IS A STICK UP!

WHAT'S THE FUSS ABOUT, BLACK BART?



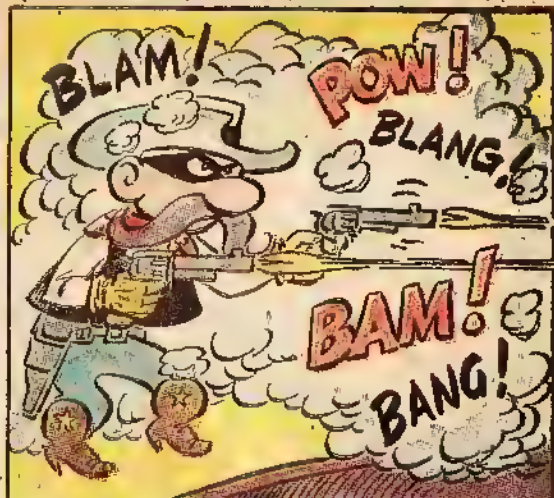
THIS IS YOUR LAST WARNING, POLECATS--HANDS UP!



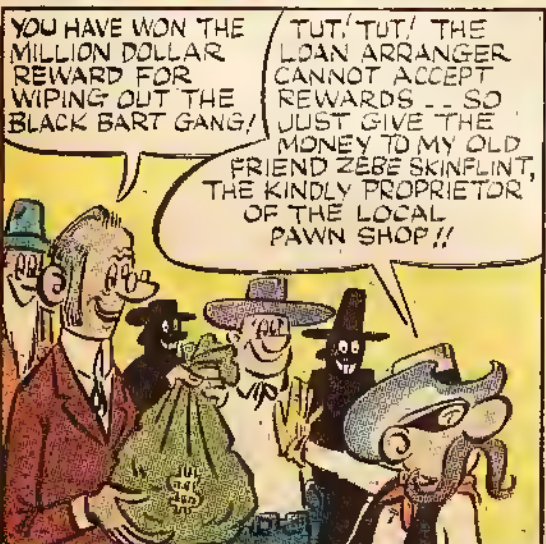
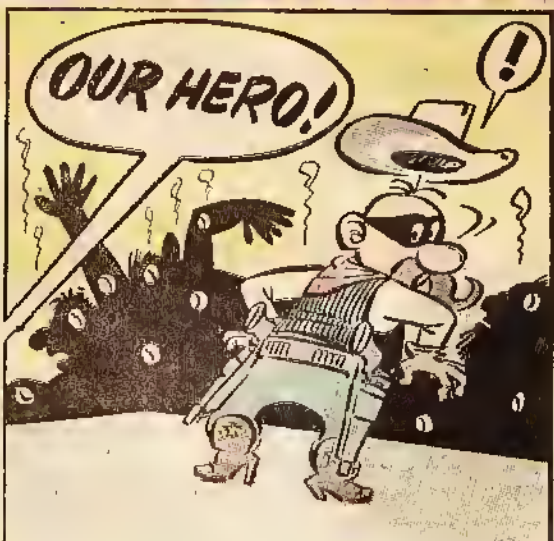
HEY, BOYS! LOOK! AH GOT ME A BANK ROBBER!



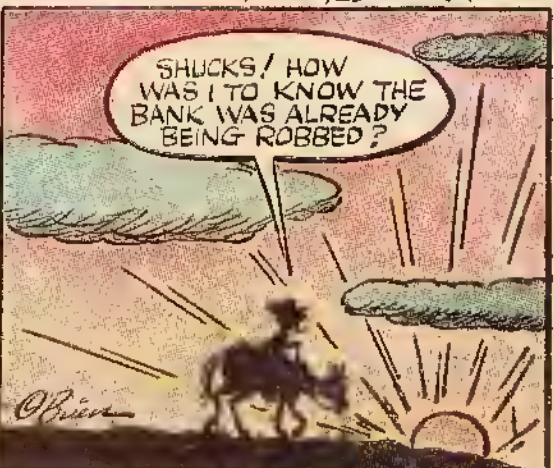
AT LAST THE LOAN ARRANGER IS PUSHED TOO FAR AND.....



WHEN THE SMOKE FINALLY CLEARS WE FIND OUR HERO IN COMPLETE CONTROL OF THE DEAD EYE FIRST NATIONAL BANK...



SO AS THE SUN SLOWLY SINKS INTO THE WEST THE LOAN ARRANGER HEADS DOWN THAT LONG, LONG, LONG TRAIL...



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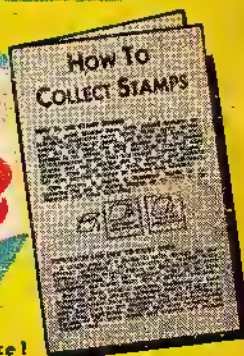
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